

Forbes lists video gamer 'PewDiePie' as top YouTube earner

15 October 2015



In this Sept. 25, 2015 file photo, Lindsey Stirling performs during the Life is Beautiful festival, in Las Vegas. YouTube's top-earning celebrity is Felix Kjellberg, better known by his handle "PewDiePie," a 25-year-old video-game-playing jokester who took in \$12 million in the year ending June 1, 2015. Forbes magazine says he tops its first list of people who have spun short online videos into huge piles of cash. The dancing violinist Stirling ranked fourth on Forbes list with \$6 million. (Photo by Paul A. Hebert/Invision/AP, File)

YouTube's top-earning celebrity is a 25-year-old video-game-playing jokester who took in \$12 million over the past year.

Forbes magazine says Sweden's Felix Kjellberg, better known by his handle "PewDiePie," tops its first list of people who have spun short online videos into huge piles of cash.

YouTube stars make money mainly by getting paid to interact with products on their channels and sharing ad revenue with YouTube. Some also star in movies, write books, go on tour, sell music or cut endorsement deals. They're a hit with younger audiences and brands trying to reach the next generation of consumers.

Two acts tied for second on Forbes' list, both earning \$8.5 million: comedy prankster duo Smosh—Ian Hecox and Anthony Padilla—and the Fine Brothers, Benny and Rafi Fine.

Dancing violinist Lindsey Stirling ranked fourth with \$6 million. Tied for fifth were comedians Rhett and Link—made of Rhett McLaughlin and Charles Lincoln Neal III—and video game commentator Olajide Olatunji, known as "KSI," with \$4.5 million.

Make-up artist Michelle Phan was seventh at \$3 million.

The No. 8 slot was a three-way tie at \$2.5 million shared by comedian Lilly Singh, or "Superwoman;" prankster Roman Atwood; and chef Rosanna Pansino.

Forbes is best known for its list of billionaires and the list appearing in its Nov. 2 issue marks its first stab at ranking YouTube stars. It says it measured earnings before management fees and taxes and came up with the figures based on data from online sources such as Nielsen, IMDb and interviews with managers, lawyers, industry insiders and the stars themselves.



In this Sept. 17, 2015 file photo, Anthony Padilla, left, and Ian Andrew Hecox arrive at the 5th Annual Streamy Awards at the Hollywood Palladium in Los Angeles. YouTube's top-earning celebrity is Felix Kjellberg, better known by his handle "PewDiePie," a 25-year-old video-game-playing jokester who took in \$12 million in the year ending June 1, 2015. Kjellberg tops Forbes Magazine's first list of people who have spun short online videos into huge piles of cash. Two acts tied for second on Forbes' list, both earning \$8.5 million: comedy prankster duo Smosh—Hecox and Padilla—and the Fine Brothers, Benny and Rafi Fine. (Photo by Rich Fury/Invision/AP, File)

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In this Oct. 28, 2013 file photo, Felix Kjellberg, aka PewDiePie, arrives at the Los Angeles premiere of "Ender's Game" at TCL Chinese Theatre in Los Angeles. YouTube's top-earning celebrity is a 25-year-old video-game-playing jokester who took in \$12 million in the year ending June 1, 2015. Forbes magazine says Kjellberg tops its first list of people who have spun short online videos into huge piles of cash. (Photo by Matt Sayles/Invision/AP, File)



APA citation: Forbes lists video gamer 'PewDiePie' as top YouTube earner (2015, October 15) retrieved 8 March 2021 from <https://phys.org/news/2015-10-forbes-video-gamer-pewdiepie-youtube.html>

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